

VZCZCXRO2608
OO RUEHBI RUEHCI RUEHLH RUEHPW
DE RUEHNE #3313/01 1321146

ZNY CCCCC ZZH
O 121146Z MAY 06
FM AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 3799
INFO RUCNNSG/NUCLEAR SUPPLIERS GROUP COLLECTIVE

RUEHBJ/AMEMBASSY BEIJING 1990
RUEHLM/AMEMBASSY COLOMBO 5276

RUEHKA/AMEMBASSY DHAKA 5297

RUEHIL/AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD 8273

RUEHKT/AMEMBASSY KATHMANDU 5956

RUEHMO/AMEMBASSY MOSCOW 8363

RUEHKO/AMEMBASSY TOKYO 3271

RUEHCI/AMCONSUL CALCUTTA 3797

RUEHCG/AMCONSUL CHENNAI 3698

RUEHKP/AMCONSUL KARACHI 3868

RUEHLH/AMCONSUL LAHORE 2586

RUEHBI/AMCONSUL MUMBAI 2964

RUEHPW/AMCONSUL PESHAWAR 3242

RHEBAAA/DEPT OF ENERGY WASHINGTON DC

RHEHNSC/NSC WASHDC

RUEIDN/DNI WASHINGTON DC

RHHMUNA/CDR USPACOM HONOLULU HI

RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK 0705

RHMFISS/HQ USCENTCOM MACDILL AFB FL

RUEHGV/USMISSION GENEVA 2975

RHHMUNA/HQ USPACOM HONOLULU HI

RHMFISS/HQ USSOCOM MACDILL AFB FL

RUEKJCS/Joint STAFF WASHDC

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 04 NEW DELHI 003313

SIPDIS

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 05/12/2016

TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [KDEM](#) [MNUC](#) [KNNP](#) [PINR](#) [IN](#)

SUBJECT: PARLIAMENT SET TO DEBATE THE UPA'S PRO-AMERICAN FOREIGN POLICY

REF: A. NEW DELHI 3273

[¶](#)B. NEW DELHI 2983

Classified By: DCM Bob Blake, Jr., for reasons 1.4 (B,D)

[¶](#)1. (C) Summary: The UPA's pro-American foreign policy could come under intense criticism from both the Left Front (LF) and the BJP during the current parliamentary session that began May 10. The Communists, energized by victories in the just-concluded state assembly elections, will take a hostile stance, painting the UPA/Congress as stooges of the "world hegemon," and urging India to ally more closely with other developing countries. The BJP, in a political tailspin that seemingly never ends, has increasingly allowed its once-sublimated anti-Americanism to come to the fore. The BJP attack will focus on the civil-nuclear agreement, arguing that it erodes Indian sovereignty and should be scrapped due to UPA duplicity. We do not expect the beleaguered Congress to mount a strong defense in Parliament, as it is itself divided, with many within the party arguing that they have invited attacks by being too "out front" in their closeness to the US. As happened at tense moments after the nuclear agreement's announcement, Prime Minister Manmohan Singh could yet again be asked to deliver a parliamentary statement to salvage the situation. End Summary.

An Energized Left

[¶](#)2. (C) Long critical of the pro-US tilt of GOI foreign policy, a newly energized Left Front (LF) plans to move it to the center of parliamentary debate during the special session running from May 10 until later in the month. The Communists are ecstatic about sweeping to victory in both Kerala and West Bengal. Even before the trend became clear, LF leaders

indicated that they would view electoral victories as a mandate to increase criticism of the UPA's pro-US policy. Their statements are a portent of what we can expect to hear on the floor of Parliament.

Targeting America

¶3. (U) As early as April 21, CPI(M) General Secretary Prakash Karat pointed out that "the current Assembly elections would have a definite impact on national politics. He then criticized the UPA for its subservience to the US, saying that it was under pressure from Washington to open up retail trade and other areas for "American money," and that the UPA votes against Iran in the IAEA "went against the promise of an independent foreign policy." Karat urged the UPA to clarify "whether it wanted to work for the implementation of the pro-people Common Minimum Program (CMP) or a CMP of George Bush."

Especiably US Foreign Policy

¶4. (U) On May 8, CPI(M) MP and ideologue Sitaram Yechury warned the UPA that after the election results are in, the LF would "come down heavily" against the UPA's pro-US foreign policy, which he said has resulted in "too much dependence on the US" and is "detrimental to our national interest." Yechury told the "Asian Age" that the so-called peoples' movement in Nepal has emerged as a key test of the UPA's foreign policy and "We will not allow the government to

NEW DELHI 00003313 002 OF 004

buckle under US pressure." or "support any move on sanctions against Iran." Yechury claimed that "the US started off with imposing sanctions against Iraq, before embarking on an invasion. We will not allow repetition of Iraq in Iran."

And Iran In Particular

¶5. (U) In preparation for the May 10 convening of the Parliamentary session, the four parties of the LF issued a joint statement on May 8 that the UPA's stance on Iran was "not in conformity with the pursuit of an independent foreign policy and the maintenance of good relations with Iran, which was in the national interest. India should not be party to any referral of Iran to the UN Security Council or countenance any recommendation for taking action against Iran through the UN Security Council." The statement claimed that "there was no national consensus for a pro-US orientation in the UPA government's foreign policy."

A BJP in Decline Embraces Anti-Americanism

¶6. (C) Meanwhile, the BJP is in a political tailspin with no possibility of a boost from its disastrous showing in the Assembly Elections (Septels). With the party consumed by bitter rivalries and infighting, the forces that once kept the latent RSS-inspired anti-Americanism of many BJP leaders under wraps are no longer functional. As a result, more BJP leaders have blatantly adopted an anti-American stance, which will likely be evident in their utterances during this session of Parliament.

The Focus on the Separation Plan

¶7. (U) On 11 May, Prime Minister Singh submitted a complete text of India's Facilities-Specific Civil Nuclear Separation Plan to Parliament for its consideration (Ref A). The plan was almost immediately criticized by some within the think tank and scientific communities as a "deviation" from the civil nuclear agreement that the PM presented to Parliament in the last session. The critiques were laid out in a May 11

article in the "Asian Age in which Seema Mustafa rejects the Prime Minister's assertion that the measures included in the separation plan are "cost-effective and acceptable to Parliament and public opinion." Mustafa also found it contradictory that Indian nuclear facilities placed under sanctions as military facilities by the USG will be "opened to international inspections as declared civilian nuclear entities."

The BJP Targets the Nuke Deal

¶8. (U) The BJP was already unhappy about the civil nuclear agreement before the separation plan was tabled. On May 1, the party issued a formal statement endorsed by LK Advani in which it decried "the steady erosion of independence in India's foreign policy," and that the "erosion of independence "was most clearly evident in the recent Indo-US nuclear agreement, through which the UPA government has compromised India's national security." The BJP alleged that "the agreement has reduced India's sovereign and independent control over the minimum credible deterrence capability of our nuclear arsenal," and "puts India in an iniquitous

NEW DELHI 00003313 003 OF 004

position vis-a-vis other nuclear weapons states."

We Want a Chinese Copy

¶9. (U) Speaking to reporters in Ranchi on April 11, BJP President Rajnath Singh observed that "It would be better if the Indo-US nuclear deal is scrapped," pointing out that "no matter how many bombs China had exploded, the US continued to pat her back. But with India, the US had committed to supply nuclear material only when India issued a 'certificate' stating that it had not undertaken any nuclear test." Singh asserted that "this is not acceptable to us. It is against the sovereignty of our country. If the nuclear deal has to be struck, it must be similar to the one China has with America."

You Hoodwinked Us

¶10. (U) In what the press is characterizing as an initiative to steal the political spotlight from the LF, the BJP plans to introduce a privilege motion against Prime Minister Singh during the Parliamentary session to censure him for "deviating" from the statement that he made to Parliament during the pre-recess session on the civil nuclear agreement.

Sabha VK Malhotra, the BJP's Deputy Leader in Parliament, maintained on May 8 that "on the Indo-US civil nuclear deal, the Prime Minister told Parliament that his statement would be the blueprint (of the negotiation), but in real terms they are giving much more (to the US). He has completely deviated from that stated position on the deal and therefore we feel that he has misled Parliament."

An Ambitious BJP Agenda

¶11. (C) On May 12 BJP National Spokesman Prakash Javedkar confirmed to us that the BJP plans to make the civil nuclear accord a major plank of its anti-UPA attack on the floor of Parliament. Asserting that the nuclear separation plan "is equivalent to a sell out by the UPA government," Javedkar complained that India's national interests had been "severely compromised." According to Javedkar, the BJP parliamentary delegation will meet on May 15 to map out its strategy. BJP MP and head of the party's Youth Wing Dharmendra Pradhan speculated that during the May 15 meeting the MP's would most likely agree to table a motion to introduce a parliamentary debate on the separation plan. Asserting that the PM had "misled the house and is liable for censure," Pradhan claimed that the BJP is attempting to confirm with the Left Front

(LF) whether it would be willing to join with the BJP to request not only a debate but a parliamentary vote on the plan. He confirmed that if the UPA lost the vote, it would not have to resign, but would be severely embarrassed.

Comment - Congress on the Defensive

¶12. (C) Traditionally, foreign policy is not a major concern in Indian politics and rarely features in Parliamentary debate. However, the increasingly out front nature of the ever-closer relationship between Congress and the US has percolated down to the deepest depths of Indian society and has made the relationship a political issue. The LF hopes to score points against the UPA from an internationalist

NEW DELHI 00003313 004 OF 004

perspective, arguing that India should not hitch its wagon to the "world hegemon" but ally with other developing countries to push for a multi-polar international order. The BJP has taken a nationalist perspective, arguing that the UPA has made too many concessions to the US, (most particularly as it regards the civil nuclear agreement), should be more assertive and has "compromised" Indian sovereignty. The Congress Party provides an easy target, as it is itself deeply divided on the US/India relationship and is unprepared to deal with the anticipated attacks. With individual Congress MPs reluctant publicly to support UPA foreign policy, the party will likely have to call yet again on Manmohan Singh to deliver a statement or two to beat back the hounds of the opposition(s).

¶13. (C) For various reasons, Parliament was adjourned early on May 10 and 11 without conducting substantive business. With the session set to end on May 23, it is always possible that drama and hijinks will prevent the BJP and the LF from ever implementing their grandiose plans to put Congress through the wringer on the floor of Parliament. But we already are hearing suggestions that the BJP will push for the session to be extended to allow for the "critical review" of the UPA's policies.

¶14. (U) Visit New Delhi's Classified Website:
(<http://www.state.sgov.gov/p/sa/newdelhi/>)

MULFORD